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July's name mentioned in analysis of :

8 FEB 1973

ZWISCHEN HITLER UND STALIN*

(Between Hitler and Stalin)

By Dr. Peter KLEIST DPOB 1906, E. Prussia

Published by Atheneum Publishing House, Bonn, 1950

344 Pages

Index

The author, a German diplomat under Nazi Foreign Minister Ribbentrop, describes two aspects of the German-Soviet war: the administration by the Germans of the Eastern territories they occupied, and the peacefealers which were in operation between Germany and the USSR in 1943.

The author claims that the administration of the Eastern occupied territories, especially Poland in which he had a special personal interest, can be best described as complete mismanagement. In the conduct of the war, there was no long range policy. In the administration of occupied territories, there were no realistic plans for the future, only the immediate ruthless economic exploitation of local resources and an attempt to destroy the intelligentsia. The administration was in the hands of high but narrow-minded, inept, and uneducated SS officers. The Nazi Government missed all opportunities to win over the anti-Communist population of these countries and thus the Nazis played right into Stalin's hands, enabling him to create in these territories an area of vigorous and successful partisan activity.

In 1943, after the defeat of Stalingrad, the military situation of Germany appeared to be so dim that many

* Spanish translation: ENTRE HITLER Y STALIN, translated by Victor SCHOLZ, published by Ahr Publishing House, Barcelona, 1953, 344 pages, index.

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DATE 2006

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high Nazi officials did not believe that the war on two fronts could be won. German armies failed to take any of the strategic objectives (Moscow, Leningrad, Baku, the British Isles, Gibraltar, Suez). Italy was more of a nuisance than a help to the Axis. And France was revolting. During his visit in Stockholm, the author, by mere chance, got into indirect contact with the Soviet Embassy and was informed that the Soviets were willing to talk unofficially. With Ribbentrop's approval, three German-Soviet contacts took place, but none led to any results, because Soviet conditions were unacceptable to the Germans. Moreover, there was a justified suspicion on the German side that the Soviets started these negotiations expecting that rumors about them would make the western Allies more willing to listen to their demands. Unconditional surrender announced by the Western Allies in Casablanca made further talks useless.

The author, as many other German postwar writers of memoirs, presents himself as anti-Nazi and criticizes severely the Eastern policy of the wartime German Government. He considers himself an expert on East European matters and feels offended that his Nazi superiors did not listen to his advice. His obvious bitterness towards the West is rather personal, because, after the end of the war, he was held for some time in a British internment camp in Bad Nenndorf, under conditions which he considered uncomfortable and undignified.

16201 The book contains no information about specific Soviet intelligence activities. The author does, however, mention, inter alia, the name of an NKVD official, who was a member of the Soviet Resettlement Commission in 1940. This person, i.e., General Paul OSOKIN, may be identical with a Boris Pavlovich OSOKIN, who is identified in the captured German World War II documents as Counsellor of the Soviet Embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria in 1942. According to the captured documents, he issued instructions of a military nature (see CD #263). This man is probably identical with the Boris OSOKIN, who was identified as a "secret police career man" by Time magazine (10 February 1947). He was said to be posing as the deputy to the Soviet Ambassador in Budapest.

The author, Dr. Peter KLEIST was born 1904 in Marienburg, East Prussia, grew up in Danzig, and studied law at the University of Berlin. In 1936, he was assigned to the German Foreign Ministry's section for Eastern Europe. In 1943, he was transferred to the Ministry for Eastern

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Occupied Territories, where he spent several months. Upon his return to the Foreign Ministry, he was frequently used for discreet and secret missions. In 1945 he was interned in the British camp at Bad Nenndorf.

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